7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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The second water-hole had also proved to be dry, when they eventually found it. However, the chief's slave-worker, who was supposed to want to get my shot-gun, had known that there was a third water-hole some distance away. Francisco had never trusted the man, and no doubt had his reasons, but there was nothing to do but to follow him. It had been quite a long distance to this third water-hole and it had taken a lot of finding. The slave had not been sure of the way; but with their wonderful instinct they had reached it, and there was water in it. 579

Thus the slave had not deceived them, but Francisco had still felt uncomfortable. That was when he had fired the two shots. He wanted an answering signal so as to know that nothing had happened to us. I pointed out that the shots could have drawn the Cusina down on him. He had not thought of that, not being especially bright. However, we were no longer split up and the animals had had all the water they could drink. It was time to move on and we kept going till the heat of the coming day forced us to rest.

We flung ourselves down under a cactus and hung up a piece of canvas to protect us from the sun. The Indians made a fire with two pieces of stick and some dry horse-dung. This they fed with cactus branches and then put a pot of sea-water over the fire. Had they gone crazy, we asked.

No, Francisco told us, they were going to cure the animals of their tiredness. And hastily he added that the treatment was external.

When the water was hot the Indians took calabashes, filled them and poured the water over the animals' legs. The poor brutes leaped and jumped. The water was too hot and I pointed this out. Francisco explained that this was a recognized way of curing tired legs and pointed out that the animals had not been so lively for weeks. However, they cannot have liked the treatment much, for when the Indians approached with their 'medicine', they moved away. I forbade them to use scalding water; but when it had cooled somewhat they continued, expertly flinging calabash after 579 232

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579 calabash of salt water over the animals' legs. The fact
[a32] remains that both riding and pack animals trotted along considerably more briskly that day.

The following day we could see Jepitz, solitary cone-shaped hill of the savannas, blue in the distance. The Cusina Hills had withdrawn. The worst of the danger from bandits must now be over, we thought. We were to learn, however, that the bandits made longer raids than we had imagined.

GD If we had now set course for Jepitz, or La Teta as the Creoles called it, we could have cut across western Guajira to Rio Hacha, a short cut that would have taken only a few days. We had other plans, however. We wanted to go into Venezuela, to which Southern Guajira and the coast up to Castilletes belongs, and visit the Sinamaica lagoons where, on the shores of Lake Maracaibo, live the Paraujano Indians, the Guajiro's nearest relatives. While the Guajiro's country is as dry as a desert, one could almost call the Paraujano water Indians, for they live in pile-dwellings out in the water. We knew that they did not retain as much of their original culture as did the Guajiro, though they still dwelt as their ancestors had, but even so we felt that it would be interesting to visit them. Also, as we had to admit to ourselves, the thought of all that water was tempting after going short for so long. There were still wide savannas ahead of us, but we knew that the worst was over.

594 We now came across a minor chief with his herds. He had camped under some trees and welcomed us with exaggerated friendliness, but then both he and his men had already had one over the eight. However, they were still at the merry stage, though fighting would inevitably come later. The chief had bought no small quantity of spirits. There was a whole row of kegs. When he heard that we intended to continue, which obviously grieved him considerably, he tried to press one of these kegs on us. We were to take it and drink his health on our way. We managed with considerable difficulty to decline the gifts and instead received a hammock, sandals and some arrows, which we valued much more. Then off we went.

GD The savanna was almost bare and we could not hang up